DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 252 060 FL 014 712

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TITLE Deixis and Self/Other Reference in Japanese Discourse. Sociolinguistic Working Paper Number 99.
INSTITUTION Southwest Educational Development Lab., Austin, Tex.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE Jul 82
NOTE 38p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Discourse Analysis; Form Classes (Languages); *Grammar; *Japanese; *Morphology (Languages); Pronouns; Sociolinguistics
IDENTIFIERS *Deixis; *Referents (Linguistics); Self Reference (Language)

ABSTRACT

The communication of "person" has been a particularly elusive area of Japanese discourse. The elusive status of the person term (as distinguished from the Indo-European personal pronoun) raises the question of whether such terms, along with titles, kin terms, proper names, age-status terms, and zero forms, may all be part of a single system for differentiating self and other. Approaching the definition of person in the context of discourse eliminates some of the complexity of defining the entire system of terms, by shifting the emphasis from terms for person to communication of person. The continuum of person in Japanese is deictic, and the deictic zero point of Japanese discourse is the speaker's primary group rather than the individual speaker. The question of variability of self by which the Japanese have been defined is more a matter of focus than real difference in self/other relationships. In Japanese the focus is on the continuum itself while in English it is on the poles. An organization of discourse that seems enormously contradictory can be resolved by a multiple perspective that includes the relationships between discourse utterances, the social participants producing them, and the relationships they are negotiating in discourse. The point along the continuum between speaker and addressee that an utterance defines is generated only by participants in a particular discourse. This opens further questions as to whether Japanese social life is organized deictically and can be analyzed from a similar perspective. (MSE)

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DEIXIS AND SELF/OTHER REFERENCE IN JAPANESE DISCOURSE

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Sociolinguistic Working Paper
NUMBER 99

July, 1982

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
211 East Seventh Street
Austin, Texas

FL014712

DEIXIS AND SELF/OTHER REFERENCE IN JAPANESE DISCOURSE

Jane Bachnik

The communication of "person" has been a particularly elusive area of Japanese discourse. Linguists seem in general agreement that words for person--even those commonly translated as "pronouns," cannot be equated with personal pronouns, and that "no real personal pronouns exist that correspond to the Indo-European personal pronouns." (Harada 1975:510) Instead, person reference for a Japanese speaker combines a number of classes which would be separate systems in English. These include titles, kin terms, proper names, age-status terms and zero forms, as Befu and Norbeck (1958), Fischer (1965; 1970), and Suzuki (1973; 1976; 1977) have pointed out. Terms which have been translated respectively as 'I' and 'you,' and placed in a special class as pronouns by traditional Japanese grammarians actually manifest no structural relationships which would require their treatment in a different class from such forms as haha '(my, our) mother,' or syuzin 'husband.' (Prideaux 1967:103).

To avoid the connotations of person implicit in the term "personal pronoun," and to investigate the range of Japanese "person," I prefer to use "person term" rather than "pronoun" in this discussion.[1]

The elusive status of person terms raises the question as to whether such terms, along with titles, kin terms, proper names, age-status terms, and zero forms, may all be part of a single system for differentiating 'self' and 'other' in Japanese. Such a system has not yet been delineated and attempts to do so thus far make it seem monumentally complex. For example, Fischer (1965) has identified 10 different forms of self/other reference for a small family of three members; moreover, he specifies that the reference forms he delineates are not replicable beyond this single family.

What Fischer describes in detail raises many questions both as to how the "10 different forms" are integrated, and how the members of this one family communicate with other families, learning and controlling usage which would appear equally complex, and different, from family to family to family. As Fischer himself admits, "To account for all the variation in forms . . . would be a very lengthy and complex task." (1964:119)

Because of the complexity of defining the system of terms I propose to approach the definition of person in the context of discourse. For one thing, this shifts the emphasis from terms for person to communication of person in discourse. One index of the usefulness of this approach is the general agreement by linguists that Japanese person terms can usually be omitted in discourse. For example, Harada states that "what is expressed in English by a personal pronoun is always expressible with a zero if the context permits." (1975:510) The frequent omission of person terms implies that they are redundant, and further, that it would be more useful to consider other means for specifying person in Japanese. One obvious candidate for this are the highly developed systems of register, variously termed 'honorifics,' 'polite language,' and 'speech levels' in Japanese.[2]

Register has previously been linked to the functions of pronouns (Lyons 1977; Martin 1964). More specifically, register has also been linked to the sociocultural correlates of status, which in turn are closely related to the communication of distance. Thus Head notes widespread distinctions of degrees of respect or social distance which are communicated in address (via alternation among various reference forms), and notes the frequency of these distinctions in Asian languages, such as Burmese, Cambodian, Japanese and Korean. (Head 1978: 187.)

It is important to look more closely at the function of the "pronoun" itself. Those few who have argued for personal pronouns in Japanese have largely focused on pronouns in their anaphoric function.[3] Yet to consider pronouns as "noun substitutes" (to put anaphora crudely) is misleading in two respects, as Lyons points out: first, it fails to distinguish between nouns and nominals, and second, it makes anaphora, rather than deixis, the primary and most basic function of pronouns. The term "pronoun" is thus misleading "in its traditional implication of substitutability for nouns (or nominals)." (1977:637)

Because of the relationships between person, register usage, and the communication of social distance I therefore wish to pursue person broadly, considering both its sociocultural correlates, and its use in discourse.[4] Before discussing person in Japanese, I will first consider it more generally, focusing particularly on the relation of person to both role and status. "Person" is related through the Latin [per sonae "that through which the sound (comes) or "mask"], to the theater, and the Latin is a translation of the Greek "dramatic character" or "role." The relation between theatrical and social status is obvious, and Lyons is equally explicit: "The use of this term [person] by grammarians derives from their metaphorical conception of a language-event as a drama in which the principal role is played by the first person, the role subsidiary to his by the second person, and all other roles by the third person." (1977:638)

Differences between the three "persons" have long been discussed and related to a "subjective-objective" or "self-other" opposition. Forchheimer calls the first and second persons "personal," or "subjective" but holds that the third person (after Bloomfield) is not personal, but "impersonal" or "objective:" "Whoever does not act a role in the conversation either as speaker or as addressed remains in the great pool of the impersonal, referred to as 'third person.'"

Forchheimer also cites Boas: "Logically, our three persons of the pronoun are based on the two concepts of self and not-self, the second of which is subdivided, according to the needs of speech, into the two concepts of the person addressed and the person spoken of." (1953:5)

The difference in degree of participation in the discourse between second and third persons (or between address and reference) has often been noted. Lyons considers this "a point that cannot be emphasized too strongly," (1977:639) while Benveniste considers the distinction so important that he would limit the definition of "person" to those actually participating in the discourse: "'Person' belongs only to I/you and is lacking in he. This basic difference will be evident from an analysis of I." (1971:217)

But the "subjective-objective" and "self-other" opposition has also been related to a continuum of distance from speaker to addressee (and referent). Becker (1974) refers to person as a "cline," which he calls central, "perhaps the central thread in the semantic structure of all languages." (1974:229) According to Becker, not only person terms, but other language forms, as well as the organization of discourse, and metaphor are related to the cline along which a speaker defines 'self' and 'others.' He writes that "Between the subjective, pointed, specific pronominal 'I' and the objective, generic common noun, between these poles the words of all languages--words for people, animals, food, time, space, indeed words for everything--are ordered and categorized according to their distance--spatial, temporal, social, biological, and metaphorical--form the first person, the speaker." (1974:229)

As Becker notes, both Leach (1963) and Hall (1969) relate the distance cline beyond the use of person terms. Leach (1963) relates the cline of person to the social universe of the self, and his argument is worth considering closely.

He relates a number of varied categories [such as kinship, animals, and physical setting (house, fields, etc.)] to a 'self'/'other' continuum, and his argument for animal categories and verbal abuse hinges on the perception of what is continuous in nature as discontinuous in social reality.

Leach argues that language not only classifies "things" in the environment but that it also specifies the location of such categories on the continuum of person in relation to the speaker. The "thing" and its location are difficult to perceive simultaneously; and create a kind of figure/ground difficulty. Thus the "figures" (either natural or social; spoken to or spoken of) pointed out along the continuum may be viewed as separated from each other (by emphasizing the "figures", and not the continuum). But, alternately, if the continuum is viewed, then the connectedness between the "figures" is emphasized. I add a note that it is important to distinguish that the continuum is not at the same logical order, or level of abstraction, as the figures viewed on it. The continuum is at a metalevel (it may be said to specify context), while the "figures" are in the context [following Bateson (1972), after Russell's Theory of Logical Types]. This is why figure and ground cannot be perceived simultaneously.

To return to the difference between the "three" persons in Indo-European pronouns, Forchheimer notes that the third "person" is defined only by opposition to the first two "persons." "By opposition in the system structure, the remainder then, and then only, becomes the third 'person.'" (Forchheimer 1953:5-6) But Forchheimer also notes that between the first and second person there is constant shifting so that "In the same conversation A refers to himself, A, as 'I,' and to B as 'you' while B calls A 'you' and himself B, 'I.'" The shifting between first and second persons defines the speakers in opposition as well. "I use 'I' only when I am speaking to someone who will be a you in my address. It is this

condition of dialogue that is constitutive of person, for it implies that reciprocally I becomes you in the address of the one who in his turn designates himself as I . . ." (Benveniste 1971:224-5)

Actually, the shifting of the first and second person defined by the 'I' and 'you' is from the vantage point of a third person witnessing a discourse from outside. Inside the discourse both 'I' and 'you' are defined from the reference-point of the 'I;' and do not switch for the speaker and addressee. The "shifting" involves a switch in the locus of the discourse and the use of terms shifts only when the locus shifts.

Thus, the difference between 'I' and 'you' is defined from each 'I,' and in this sense both the second and third persons are defined in opposition to the first. As Forchheimer reasons, "To continue the previously used simile, the third person is first singled out from the pool, and then the second. There must, therefore, be a stage when only the first person is singled out and opposed to all that remains." (1953:6) The opposition between first and second person is an opposition perceived by the first person.

Ultimately there is also an opposition in the perception of the 'I' by the 'I.' It is possible to speak about the 'I' ("I am ill," as Forchheimer puts it in 1953:4). This means it is possible to vary the distance of the speaker not only from the addressee (as the 'you'), but from the self as well. 'Me,' as Cooley and Mead long ago pointed out, is more reflexive, more self-aware, and thus more distanced from the 'I.' Furthermore, the 'I,' as both Lacan (1977) and Michaels (1980) have pointed out, is itself a construct which depends on self-awareness--and thus distance--from the self.

The continuum of person and the reflexive distancing between "persons" helps to clarify the cross-cultural definition of person and person terms which, as

Becker notes "differ from language to language" . . . so that "I is not I, you is not you, and we is not we from one language to the next." (1974:230) "Person" not only refers to a landscape of "things" but also locates that landscape in relation to the speaker. Person is based upon the idea of pointing, rather than on anaphora, or "noun substitution," and pointing in turn is closely related to indexical meaning, or ostensive definition. But that which is "pointed out" cannot be totally separated from the process of pointing. A double perspective is thus present in "person:" one of location (or ground) and one of reference, (or figure) that is, a focus on pointing and another on that which is pointed out. I believe Nakane has captured this same double perspective in two diagrams (A and B in Figure 1) in which she has compared modern Western 'self'/'other' relationships (Figure A) with Japanese 'self'/'other' relationships (Figure B).

FIGURE 1: SELF/OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

FIGURE A

FIGURE B

(From Nakane 1972:138)

Figures A and B each represent a different facet of a multidimensional perspective, so that Figure A depicts the "figures" on the self/other horizon, (and thus emphasizes discontinuity) while Figure B depicts the pointing process (and thus emphasizes continuity). They are not necessarily exclusive, either for Japan or the West, but can be integrated to represent both the cline of person and the persons on the cline.

Both "pointing" and the continuum of person are inseparably linked to deixis, which comes from a Greek word meaning "pointing" or "indicating" in the sense that "the speaker, by virtue of being the speaker, casts himself in the role of ego and relates everything to his viewpoint." (Lyons 1977:638) Ego places him or herself at the center of a system of spatio-temporal coordinates and "anchors" the discourse by constantly relating these coordinates to the 'I' which operates as the deictic zero-point. The 'I' anchors demonstratives such as 'this'/'that,' 'here'/'there,' as well as adverbs of time, such as 'now' and 'then.' Directional words such as 'left' and 'right' are deictic, as well as 'up' and 'down.' Certain verbs, such as 'come' and 'go,' ('bring' and 'take') as well as verb tense itself are deictic.

Deixis thus indicates the relationship between the persons and objects spoken of on the speaker's time-and-space horizon. Discourse always includes deictic pointers which must be mutually understood in order for the discourse to go on. Deictic communication is elusive because it operates largely in the realm of the "how," rather than the "what" [just as the 'I' is closely linked to the performance of the speaker, and cannot be accounted for by saying that 'I' means "the one who is (now) speaking" (Lyons 1977:645)]. Deixis fails when we cannot find or locate what the speaker is talking about (and thus cannot follow the discourse) rather than when the referent pointed to is "incorrect." To illustrate deixis

Fillmore discusses an example of a situation where someone (whom I call Sara) is in a building with which she is unfamiliar and is trying to find Johnny, who is also inside. Sara calls out repeatedly "Johnny, where are you?" and Johnny answers each time, "I'm right here." In this case "I'm here" serves only to make a noise which would identify Johnny, if only Sara knew where "here" was. (Fillmore 1975:39) More specifically, what Sara doesn't know is where Johnny is in relation to her own location; Johnny is telling her only where he is in reference to his location. Deixis thus presumes a certain kind of knowledge of the coordinates of a system of references such that prior assumptions exist which allow the addressee to understand what the "pointing" itself specifies.

These assumptions are illustrated by some experiments in the acquisition of deixis by children, also discussed by Fillmore. The experiments were set up so that two preschool children were communicating across a barrier. One child was given the task of telling another child how to build a particular array of blocks, and both children were given blocks. Communication examples included utterances by the first child such as "Put this block on top of that one." The response "You mean this one?" was frequently answered "Yes" without the child monitoring the blocks (or understanding which block "this" specified).

To someone overhearing this discourse it might seem acceptable (since they seemed to perceive no problem). Yet the lack of comprehension of deixis by the children meant that they were not able to carry out the task of the discourse.

Deixis is crucial, in providing a set of coordinates which allow talk both to be created and followed. Because of its close relationship with "doing" talk, deixis is also closely bound up with "doing" social life. Mutual cooperation, teaching and everyday work tasks would become impossibly cumbersome if the coordinates of discourse were not shared, if the situation of the children's

discourse was extended to adults as well, so that "Put this on top of that one," and "You mean this one?" did not communicate. The mutual understanding of "this" and "that" may be a prerequisite, not only for carrying out social tasks, but even for differentiating "us" (as "insiders," or those who can understand) from "them (as "outsiders," or those who don't understand). Schutz's treatment of "The Stranger" (1944) is based essentially on this distinction.

PERSON, DEIXIS, AND JAPANESE DISCOURSE

To pursue the question of person in Japanese I will investigate the organization of deixis in Japanese discourse. Both the lack of a system of person terms, and the emphasis on a relationship continuum between speaker and addressee (as described by Nakane's diagram) raise questions about the organization of deixis, as well as person in Japanese. If we regard Nakane's diagram as depicting deixis, rather than 'self'/'other' relationships per se and return to Forchheimer and Benveniste's contrast between 'I' and 'you' in Indo-European languages, the focus in Figure A is on the 'I' and 'you;' in Figure B it is on the mutuality between the two: on the 'I' and 'you.'

Ikuta (1980) specifically relates Nakane's continuum to discourse and to register in Japanese. Certain variations in register have previously been linked both to the functions of pronouns and to dyadic relations between speaker and addressee (Martin 1964:409; Ohnuki-Tierney 1971:12; Harada 1975:507). The speaker/addressee relationship has also been repeatedly defined as one of "distance" (Suzuki 1976; Martin 1964; Jorden 1977; Ohnuki-Tierney 1971; Ikuta 1980; 1981). Ikuta defines distance on multiple axes: social, psychological, or within the discourse structure itself.

We may perhaps safely assume that the deictic anchor point is Ego in societies where the individual is the basic unit of social organization. But in societies where the basic unit is not the individual, the question of the deictic anchor point and its relation to social organization must be raised, rather than assumed. In Japan, the basic social unit is not the individual, but the primary group.[5]

I will therefore pose two questions: 1) whether the primary group, rather than the individual is the deictic anchor point in Japanese and 2) whether the continuum between speaker/addressee (rather than terms for both) is used to define deixis.

Both these questions raise additional questions. For example, the organization of the continuum raises questions about approach in general; specifically that of variation, open-endedness, and indeterminancy, considered by Neustypný to be "the most important current problem in honorific studies," (1977:127). The problems of variation noted by linguists are also noted for the organization of the 'self.' Thus Suzuki speaks of an "open-ended self" (1973; 1976; 1977), and Araki of the "variability of the self" (1973).

Yet at the same time the use of register in Japanese has been described as "minutely-defined" and "rigid"--"minutely-defined rules of superior-inferior relationships" (Ohnukey-Tierney 1971), in which "Part and parcel of this social rigidity was the formation of minutely defined rules of behavior for every recognized class and category of human beings." (Norbeck 1965:8)

To describe the use of register as "variable," "indeterminate," "open-ended," "rigid" and "rule-bound" seems to pose contradictions-in-terms which are difficult to reconcile. The difficulty seems nowhere more evident than in Nakane's diagram, which, on closer examination, presents a paradox. If 'self' and 'other'

are related by a continuum, this continuum cannot be abstracted, because it has meaning only in relation to a particular set of discourse participants. If the "continuum" is abstracted, it cannot represent what it is supposed to (because the latter must be communicated by a particular speaker and addressee.)

This paradox, in turn, goes back to the nature of deixis itself, and its relation to discourse context. "Pointing," the use of a set of spatio-temporal coordinates to anchor the discourse, and the prior understanding necessary to follow the use of the coordinates all require a contextual zation of meaning that is particular to (but not bound by) a specific instance of discourse. This leads to a paradox of its own: Lyons remarks that "Deixis, in general, sets limits upon the possibility of decontextualization;" yet decontextualization is necessary to understand how discourse (and deixis) can be used and carried over to other contexts.

The questions I have raised here are obviously beyond the scope of this paper, and I can only address them in a partial and incomplete way. But I will begin the investigation of Japanese deixis by considering its relation to discourse context, in two ways: I will examine the question of the deictic anchor point by considering the use of nouns in establishing a register. I will then consider the question of the deictic continuum by examining the use of verbs in establishing a register.

THE USE OF NOUNS IN ESTABLISHING A REGISTER

In Japanese discourse, nouns may be adapted to certain usages by the addition of a prefix o or go; and names made honorific by a set of suffixes which Harada lists (1975:509) (See Figure 2, Figure A).

FIGURE 2: JAPANESE PERSON REGISTER

FIGURE A: NOUN SUFFIXES

sama	(very polite)
san	(average)
kun	(used for men only)
tyan	(diminutive)
sensei	(to be explained)

From Harada (1975:509)

FIGURE B: FIRST PERSON TERMS

watakushi	(very formal for men; less so for women)
watashi	(formal for men; but average for women; . . .)
atakusi	(rare for men; sounds snobbish for women)
atasi	(chiefly for women; colloquial)
ware	(archaic)
wasi	(dialectal, chiefly for men; . . .)
boku	(exclusively for men; . . .)
ore	(exclusively for men; colloquial)
ora	(dialectal)

From Harada (1975:511)

The suffixes are not adequately translated as 'Mr.,' 'Mrs.' and 'Miss' in English. This is because they are not organized around the same set of distinctions (such as gender or marriage), but also because they do more than simply "name" or state titles. The suffixes are not ordinarily used in self-reference. Furthermore, when speaking to someone outside Ego's group they are not ordinarily used in reference to any member inside Ego's group. The zero use of suffix versus the use of suffix is thus an important distinction which conveys information regarding the location of the speaker vis-a-vis the addressee, and this information should ideally be included in the translation of these terms.

The distinction between in-group and out-group is replicated in other usage, including that of kinship terms, which are differentiated into two sets. As Jorden states: "I can use the same term (otoosan) to refer to your father (out-group) or to address my own father (in-group) or to refer to our father in talking to my brothers or sisters (also in-group). But I will use a different term (titi) in talking about my father to the out-group." In other words, the in-group/out-group distinction that applies to those who are communicating is regarded as primary. (1977:103)

The distinction requiring the noun suffix -san is considered extremely important by native speakers, and an important aspect of child language acquisition is for children to learn this distinction and, for example, not to use tyan for self-reference.

Finally, the word most commonly used for "house" in everyday language, uchi, if unmodified refers to me, my (or our "household"); as well as I, me, my group, (we or us). Uchi can be qualified by a modifier (or set of modifiers) to refer to another group (sono uchi "that house;" Watanabe san no uchi "Watanabe's house"). For address I use the term otaku "your house;" "you." Uchi/otaku not

only communicates the in-group/out-group distinction but combines what in Indo-European languages would be person terms with a group focal point which is deictic. Uchi is in some senses the counterpart of the English 'I,' but uchi also has the basic sense of my group (meaning my primary group). [Uchi is used for a variety of groups; for company groups in addition to the household, or family, as Nakane points out (1970).] Uchi is always someone's uchi; one cannot speak of "the" uchi, or "an" uchi. Uchi is the speaker's own group, unless marked by modifiers, and thus is deictic; uchi is also the zero-point of the speaker's discourse.[6]

The usage of noun prefixes and suffixes, kin terms, and uchi/otaku is understandable if all members of the primary group are in a similar "anchor" position vis-a-vis outsiders. Communication within the group, however, could be expected to differ markedly since all members would share the same anchor point. (See Figure 3.) Because of space limitations, I can consider only intergroup communication of deixis in this paper.

I propose that reference and address distinctions in kinship terminology also function deictically. But in contrast to Indo-European pronominal usage (see Figure 4) where address versus reference is distinguished with second and third person pronouns, in Japanese the reference/address distinction is closely related to the boundary of the speaker's group. Thus one set of kin terms is used both for in- and out-group address, but only for out-group reference; the other set is used only for in-group reference. Furthermore, the distinction between address and reference is not differentiated by a single set of terms. The usage of noun prefixes and suffixes, kin terms, and uchi/otaku all communicate both group boundary and reference/address distinctions.

FIGURE 3: JAPANESE DEICTIC ORGANIZATION

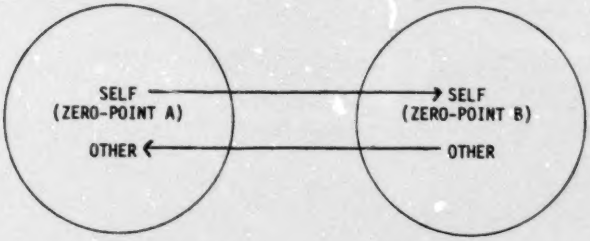


FIGURE A: INTERGROUP DEICTIC COMMUNICATION

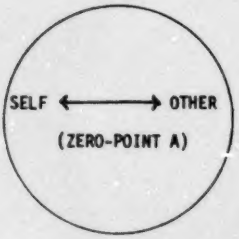


FIGURE B: INTRAGROUP DEICTIC COMMUNICATION

FIGURE 4: REFERENCE AND ADDRESS FOR PERSON RFGISTER

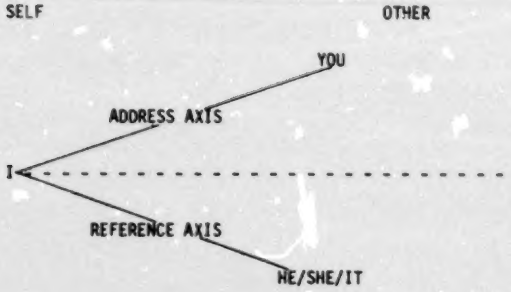


FIGURE A: ENGLISH REFERENCE/ADDRESS

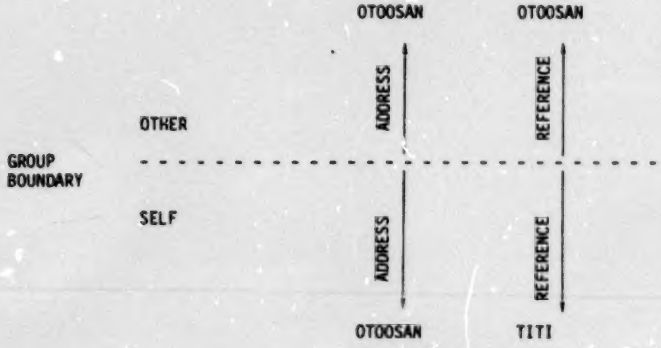


FIGURE B: JAPANESE REFERENCE/ADDRESS

In Japanese the reference/address distinction operates where the first person would be employed in Indo-European languages. This is understandable if the Japanese primary group is the deictic zero point because the zero point of the speaker is not isomorphic with the speaker (as is the 'I') and because the speaker is part of, but does not encompass, the anchor point. Since others besides Ego are in the group, both address and reference are used for in-group as well as intergroup communication. Both reference and address can be differentiated from within as well as outside the group by distance distinctions. Distancing operates from the perspective of the speaker, just as pronouns do, so that "they," "you," and "me" all communicate different distances from "I." But Japanese provides many more opportunities for communicating distance than English.

Although words such as 'watakushi' and 'watashi' have been translated from Japanese as 'I,' these words do not have a deictic function in discourse comparable to the English 'I.'

For example, as Wolff points out, even the formal term for 'I,' watakushi, has meaning beyond that of self-reference, and he (1980:20) cites the following examples:

watakusiritu - 'privately established' (as opposed to kooritu - 'public')

watakusi suru - 'take for one's own use,' 'embezzle'

watakusi no nai - 'unselfish,' 'impartial,' 'fair'

Furthermore, in Japanese deixis, not one but two anchor points must be located. I suggest that this is done by each speaker locating the group reference point of the addressee in relation to that of the self. This defines a continuum from speaker to addressee (or, strictly speaking, two continuums, defined to and from the zero-points of both discourse participants--assuming there are only two.)

THE USE OF VERBS IN ESTABLISHING REGISTER

The use of verbs in establishing register is highly complex. To illustrate, I will now consider several inflections of the verb iku 'to go,' all of which could be translated into English as "Is/are someone going?" (See Figure 5)

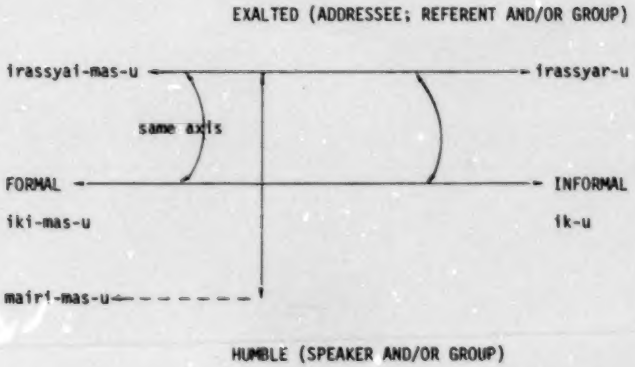
Although the subject is not indicated, both these sets of utterances include information about the relationship between the speaker and addressee. In the first set of utterances this is contained in the suffix -mas- (-u is an imperfective aspectual suffix). Ikimasu is formal while iku is informal. Both Jorden (1962) and Martin (1964) describe this in terms of an axis rather than a dichotomy. The axis is contingent on relationships: ". . . i.e., the in-group/out-group relationships of the participants of the conversation . . ." (Ikuta 1980). The relationships between the participants in the second set of utterances is very close, or intimate, as members of the same group would be close. The speaker of the first set of utterances defines himself as more distantly related from the addressee, than the speaker of the second.

In addition to the formal/informal axis, both Jorden and Martin define another axis. To consider the same speech act again in the third utterance, which uses an equivalent of iku, irassyaimasu indicates respect or deference by exalting the addressee. A possible reply is a substitute for iku, mairimasu, which also indicates deference toward the addressee--this time by using a humble form for the speaker's action. Again a speaker/addressee distinction of person is being made. Irassyaimasu and all exalted forms (as Martin calls them) are used directionally only toward the addressee, while mairimasu (and all humbling forms) are used directionally only of the speaker (or the speaker's group). As Figure 6 shows, the above utterances communicate deference by distancing the speaker from the addressee. In fact, the question with answer could communicate

FIGURE 5: VERB REGISTER

1. A: iki-mas-u ka?
   going question marker
2. A: ik-u (rising intonation)
   going?
3. A: irassyai-mas-u ka?
   going question marker
4. A: irassyar-u (rising intonation)
   going?

FIGURE 6: VERB AXES

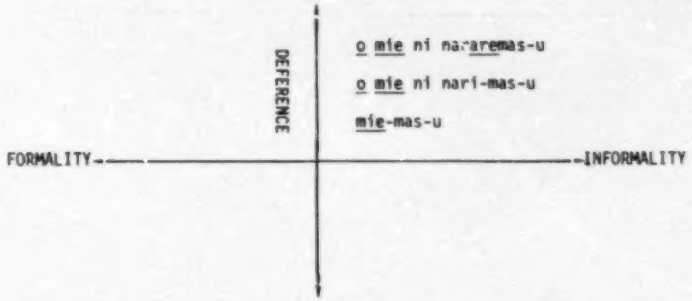


a double distance (and deference) if there were both exalting of the addressee and humbling of self. Finally, when forms are used both for exalting the addressee and humbling the speaker, distance is triply marked because all verbs on the deference axis are marked for formality/informality as well. (See Figure 6)

There are two main axes of choice in the use of verbs: from the "plain, familiar, psychologically close" to the "embellished, stiff psychologically distant form" on the axis of formality (Jorden 1977:104); and the further choice of either exalting the addressee and/or humbling the speaker on the axis of deference. Thus in choosing verbal forms the Japanese speaker is defining two aspects of relationship along a continuum: degree of closeness and degree of deference. Both of these choices are impossible to avoid. As Jorden notes: "Almost without exception even single utterances are marked for politeness and formality, and certainly anything longer than a two-item exchange will be so marked." (1977:103) It is possible to be close (or intimate) and deferential, as well as distant and deferential. It is possible to be close and not deferential (plain) and distant and not deferential. But it is not possible to speak without defining one's relationship vis-a-vis the addressee.

Verb usage is more complex than these example utterances suggest, since not only formality and deference, but degrees of formality and deference can be indicated along the axes, by a variety of means. One of these involves the insertion of the passive infix. To consider the same verb iku, once more, deference can also be communicated by the following underlined morphemes which I have arranged along a deference continuum in Figure 7:

FIGURE 7: VERB REGISTER AND THE CONTINUUM OF DEFERENCE



The example utterances are arranged according to degree of distance along the deference continuum. Distance is indicated 1) by substituting mieru "appears," "materializes" for iku "go" 2) by using the verb stem mie as an honorific noun in the locution omie ni narimasu and 3) by inserting the passive infix -rare- in naru.

Mizutani (personal communication 1974) considers that not only the passive, but all verbal forms indicate varying degrees of distance by locating the subject on the relationship axis between speaker and addressee.

The use of noun prefixes and suffixes in establishing register, as well as distinctions between reference/address and in/out-group are all understandable if we define person deictically. Furthermore the vantage point of deixis allows the usage of both nouns and verbs in establishing register to be viewed similarly. All these usages locate Ego's group (as zero-point) in relation to the addressee's, primarily by communicating both the group boundary and the distance between Ego and addressee's group. Distance is elaborated along two axes in the choice of

verbs. In fact, the organization of person terms themselves (see Figure 2 Figure B) communicates these same distance distinctions.

One final consequence of defining person by location along a continuum rather than by the use of terms is that the "shifting" that Forchheimer notes between first and second person in English ("in the same conversation A refers to himself, A, as 'I,' and to B as 'you' while B calls A 'you' and himself B, 'I'") is not a shift per se, but a focus on directionality in Japanese. The verb axes elaborate both distance (in the formality/informality distinctions) and direction (in the deference distinctions). But directionality itself communicates an important aspect of deixis. The continuum which locates A in relation to B may be defined (and communicated) differently than that which locates B (as speaker, becoming A, in relation to B).

One of the ways in which direction can be communicated is that of asymmetricality (just as the tu/vous distinction communicates asymmetricality). The two-way communication of direction in Japanese deixis (and the possibility for at least triple marking for distance along the two verb axes) makes for intricate possibilities for communicating asymmetricality in Japanese. The relationship between asymmetrical deictic communication and hierarchy should certainly be investigated.

Limitations of space prevent me from taking up the question of directionality in more detail. Here I merely point out that although the same terms may be used in 'self' as in 'other' reference, (for example, boku, sensei, or otoosan) one must still raise the question whether this constitutes shifting of perspective, (and whether one is really adopting the addressee's "point of view" in using this term). Moreover, the "shifting" which Forchheimer notes for person and Lyons for deictic communication is better described in Japanese as shifting along the

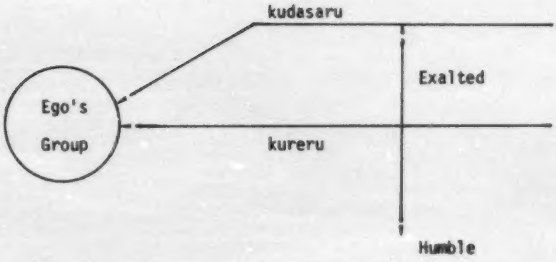
distance axis (rather than shifting between poles). Ikuta has documented frequent shifts occurring within a single discourse situation (1980). In my own research I have also observed considerable shifting along the axes within the context of a single relationship, but in different situations.

Directionality is also communicated by the deictic verbs iku and kuru (as well as by their counterparts 'come' and 'go' in English). In the English usage of 'come' certain situations allow the speaker to assume the deictic reference point of the addressee (which Lyons calls "deictic projection" or "empathetic deixis.") For example, if I ask "Are you coming to the party tomorrow night?" (and the party is at my house) the answer "Yes, I'm coming" is appropriate even though the direction communicated is from you to me (the opposite of the direction I take in getting to the party).[7]

However, in Japanese, empathetic deixis is not realized by shifting the directionality with the verbs 'come' and 'go;' the verb kuru is used appropriately only in motion toward the speaker. (Many other languages are similar to Japanese in this respect; Fillmore notes that French and Italian are stricter than English.) As Fillmore puts this, "In these languages, when Mother calls Junior to the dinner table, Junior says 'I'm going,' not 'I'm coming.' Coming is motion toward me, not motion toward you." (1975:67)

The directionality of deixis in Japanese discourse is also similar to the organization of reciprocity and exchange, and it is therefore pertinent to inquire whether the verbs for giving and receiving are deictic as well. Verbs for giving are differentiated directionally for giving to and from Ego (and Ego's group). (See Figure 8) These verbs also allow the speaker the same choice of differentiating formality/informality and deference along the two axes

FIGURE 8: VERBS FOR IN-GIVING*



* Verbs for Out-giving posed difficulties in diagramming which I was unable to resolve.

portrayed in Figure 6. Both iku and kuru and the verbs for giving and receiving define distance along both axes, and both also differentiate who is giving and receiving by indicating direction. The relation of the giver (and receiver) to group boundaries is also specified. Thus, " . . . when 'I give to you,' YOU are in the out-group; but when 'you give to him,' YOU are absorbed in my in-group as opposed to HIM, unless he is an intimate of mine. When 'he gives to him,' we have to decide from the situation which of the two--HE or HIM--is closer to ME and belongs in the in-group." (Martin 1964:409)

Conclusion

Although the use of register has long been recognized as performing some of the same functions as person terms, and as defining factors of social status (Martin 1964; Harada 1975; Lyons 1977; Neustupný 1977) the relationship between register, person, discourse organization and deixis in Japanese is still largely unexplored.

I have proposed that the continuum, or cline, of person is deictic, and further, that the deictic zero-point of Japanese discourse is the speaker's primary group, rather than the individual speaker, as Ego.

First, to return to the question of "open-endedness" or "variability of self" according to which the Japanese have been defined: I have proposed that these are the result of a difference in focus, rather than a real difference in 'self'/'other' relationships, and that Nakane's two diagrams help to clarify this distinction. The focus in English in on the ends of the continuum (and on subjectivity and objectivity) rather than on the continuum itself; while the focus in Japanese is on the continuum itself, rather than the poles. But

if the continuum in Japanese discourse is compared to the Indo-European discourse poles, the result is an "open-ended" or "variable" self.

On the other hand, if Japanese discourse is approached without defining where the two deictic anchors are which are necessary to grasp the discourse continuum, the result is endless variation, or "indeterminacy." Japanese register has also been described as a tightly rigid system in which "minutely-defined" rules exist for every class and social category.

An organization of discourse that is described at once by enormous variation of terms, indeterminacy of structure, and great rigidity of rules seems hopelessly contradictory. However, these apparent contradictions can be resolved (as the paradox of Nakane's diagram can be resolved) by a multiple perspective that includes the relationships between discourse utterances, the social participants who produce the utterances, and the relationships they are negotiating in discourse.

The point along a continuum between speaker and addressee which an utterance defines is generated only by participants in a particular discourse. Their reference to person is defined by their mutual "locating" of one another, and that mutual "locating," in turn, depends on how they have defined their respective relationships. "Rules" will seem "minute" (and "rigid") only if each utterance is viewed like a strip of film run backwards, and as "rule-generated," rather than seen as part of the decision-making process relating to a specific social context. If viewed in terms of the decision-making factors, the system in use exhibits considerable fluidity because the continuum is being both defined and manipulated during the process of the discourse. Here we must be careful to avoid taking the product of a social negotiation (i.e., an utterance), abstracting

it from the context in which it was produced, and applying it circularly (as a "rule") to define that very context that produced it.

I would now like to consider two final theoretical implications arising from this discussion of deixis. The importance of deixis in Japanese discourse goes beyond mere definition, or even the definition of the relationship between "distance" and deixis.

The organizational paradigm which seems most appropriate for defining register in discourse is a series of points along a continuum of utterances, all differing from one another. The continuum is constituted by a series of variations, rather than by an either/or organization (such as determinate models would produce). The question of rule relationships to these utterances is significant to pursue even further, because the system seems defined by the difference between a series of points along the continuum (i.e., by the distance _from_ A to B and _from_ B to A in various discourse situations). All the points are potentially appropriate. What defines them as such is the co-relation and definition of each speaker/addressee (or speaker/referent) in each specific situation. This is quite different from "rule" usage as it is usually understood.

To quote Neustupný: "The problem is that we assume that usage will be 'precise' or 'categorical' i.e., that individuals are consistent in their usage, that each situation has its own consistent rules, and more than anything else, that the rules for each context will always yield the same results." In other words, the methodological expectation is that the form _okawaigari suru_ 'to be affectionate' _either_ exists _or_ does not; that if it is true that it sometimes exists and sometimes does not, then an exact rule should be found to predict in which situations, or with which individual speakers it does." (1977:136) But in fact, both Neustupný and Shibata found more disagreement than either positive or

negative agreement on object honorific usage in a series of studies (i.e., more "sometimes" than either "yes" or "no" judgments on the acceptability of the object honorific forms), and they had difficulty in defining why this occurred.

Most discussions on register use assume an initial choice of "honorifics," "polite language," "speech levels" or register by which speakers define themselves able to establish communication in the first place. The factors involved in this choice are widely assumed to be social, and include age, sex, and status of speaker vis-a-vis addressee (Ikuta 1980; 1981; Wolff 1980). But the organization of these factors is certainly not obvious and they can, conceivably, be used for communicating something else (such as deictic axes). Thus, age, sex, and status may be used (perhaps polysemically) to communicate social distance by their use as features to locate A vis-a-vis B on a deictic axis.

But this opens further questions as to whether Japanese social life is also organized deictically, and whether a deictic approach to social organization might address some of the persistent methodological problems which exist in approaching social organization, as well as language. For example, variation has been well-noted in Japanese social organization, ever since Benedict described the latter by "the greatest number of 'but also's' for any nation of the world," (1946:1), and in many ways the problems of social variation mirror those of variation in language use. Would a continuum of person help to clarify the relationship in social organization between "rule," enormous variation, and the extreme sensitivity and concern about social interaction and relationships which Lebra (1972:2) calls "social preoccupation?"

Furthermore, are "social relativism," "social interactionism," (Lebra 1976) or Benedict's "situational ethic" (1946) actually better described in terms of a deictic continuum defined socially between 'self' and 'other?' Is Japanese

hierarchy, as presented, for example, in Nakane's Tateshakai no ningen kankei (translated Japanese Society, 1970) also better understood deictically, particularly since Nakane later (1972:138) discussed the continuum in Figure B as the basis for her analysis in Tateshakai? If this is so, one can pose the same questions concerning choice in social hierarchy as for the deictic continuum: is hierarchy organized by a minutely-defined series of rules, or should it be approached as fluid, and negotiated via particular discourse situations?

The investigation of person from a perspective of a deictic continuum raises a set of potentially productive questions about the relationship between discourse and social life, "rule" and social context, consciousness of 'self' and consciousness of 'others.' Investigations of person and of person terms in societies and languages other than Japanese have begun to address these questions [for example, Kawi (Becker 1974), the Javanese (Geertz 1960; 1973), the Ilongit of the Philippines (Rosaldo 1980), the Tabwa of Zaire (Roberts 1982), and the Canaque of New Caledonia (Leenhardt 1947; Clifford on Leenhardt 1982)].

Fillmore's suggestion that "the phenomena of deixis impose a number of serious empirical, conceptual and notational problems for grammatical theory" (1975:15) is very pertinent. But I think that deixis raises problems because it cannot be encompassed by grammatical theory, as long as grammar is treated as a body of rules that predict. The unavoidable relationship between deixis, discourse and social life means that deixis requires us to focus precisely at the elusive intersection between language and social life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge my gratitude for the comments of Robert J. Smith, and Eleanor H. Jorden, on an earlier draft of this paper. I am also extremely grateful to Charles J. Quinn, both for extensive comments and editing suggestions in this draft. The ideas on which this paper is based came from research in Japan (totalling five years over a nine-year period) on the Japanese ie, variously translated as "household," or "family." This research was partially supported by a Ford Foundation Grant (1970); a Fulbright Grant and two renewals (1972-74); and N.D.E.A. Title VI grants (1974-75).

NOTES

1. I am aware that "person" has strong connotations, both in linguistics and anthropology. In linguistics, there is the assumed relationship of person to the Indo-European verb paradigm and the suggestion of three persons; in anthropology, the connotation of "normative, legalistic, and/or cosmological specifications of the individuals' 'position' within a social structure" as Rosaldo points out (1980:262). However, in spite of this, I find "person" the best of a number of equally problematic alternatives.

2. All of these terms are problematic. 'Honorifics' and 'polite language' present difficulties both because their usage is not standardized, and because these terms refer to only some of the possible communication choices. Quite often, they refer specifically to the axis of deference for verbs and not to the axis of formality/informality. 'Speech levels' is problematic because it implies that there is such a thing as a defined and separate 'speech level,' whereas actual usage (even within a single utterance) often involves shifting. For these reasons I have used the cover term 'register' because of its greater amenability to shifting and variation than 'honorifics,' 'polite language' and 'speech levels.'

3. Those arguing for pronouns include Kuroda (1965), Hinds (1971) and Fischer (1970). For example, Fischer clearly bases his argument on anaphora when he says that: "the essence of a pronoun" (is the) "sense of words which can stand for speaker, addressee, and other person and the reference of which can shift according to the speaker." He further argues that "If this is taken as the essence of a pronoun then the fact that these words are morphologically indistinguishable from nouns is irrelevent." (1970:112) For a further discussion of these arguments see Wolff (1980).

4. The questions of person and deixis discussed in this paper are dealt with more extensively in a book (forthcoming from Stanford University Press) which considers person from the perspectives of both intra and intergroup communication in the social context of the Japanese ie.

5. I have deliberately avoided glossing the primary group here with another more familiar term because I consider its precise equivalent to be open to question. Before World War II the ie was clearly the basic social unit (and primary group) and this word has been variously translated "family" and "household." I consider both these translations inadequate because I regard "enterprise," rather than either "kinship" or "residence" to be the most basic aspect of the ie. (See Bachnik, forthcoming) This in turn leaves open the very real possibility that the modern enterprise group (such as a large or small corporation) rather than the "family" is now considered the "primary group." Although the Japanese can and ordinarily do have multiple group affiliations, only one affiliation is considered primary.

6. The argument for the group as a deictic anchor point should not be confused with the argument whether Japanese kin terms (Kitaoji 1971) or person terms (Wolff 1980) are sociocentric. The difficulty with the sociocentric argument is that its focus is "society" (at the level of structure), and this contradicts the logic of deixis, which defines an anchored perspective. The group may be just as anchored as the "I" (and its counterpart) in Indo-European languages. Furthermore, the group anchor point may allow the reconciliation of structural uniformities (such as the organization of positions in the Japanese ie, Kitaoji 1971) with the repeated insistence of the Japanese--not only at the national level, but the level of the group as well--that they are unique. We can at least ask the question whether the repeated insistence on "uniqueness" by the Japanese may be the group counterpart to the subjectivity of the Indo-European "I."

7. For a more detailed treatment of deictic projection in 'come' and 'go' see Fillmore (1975); Clark and Garnica (1974) and Lyons (1977).

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